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SB 2452-82 RELATING TO EARTHQUAKES

Statement for
Senate Committee on
Government Operations and Intergovernmental Relations
Public Hearing - 24 February 1982

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SB 2452-82 would establish earthquake-proof building requirements for the State of Hawaii. This statement on the bill has been submitted for review to the Legislative Subcommittee of the Environmental Center of the University of Hawaii. However, the statement does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

We are in basic agreement with the intent and provisions of the bill, acknowledging the necessity of earthquake-resistant building provisions. We have, however, three suggestions:

1. The title of the new section proposed in the law, 'Earthquake-proof building requirements', is somewhat misleading since relatively no building can be made completely earthquake-proof. We suggest retitling the section "Earthquake-resistant building requirements."
2. The requirements are proposed to apply only to buildings or structures that are 4 stories or more in height. Because of the usual types of construction used in buildings of 3 to 4 stories (cinder-block, etc.) we suggest that 3-story structures also be included in this section.
3. The Modified Mercalli Scale of 1931 is a scale of earthquake intensities, not a scale of seismic-probability zones. The reference to the scale on line 11 and 12 is inappropriate and should be deleted.
4. We do not believe that the proposed requirements will increase building costs prohibitively, and they definitely will provide greater safety to Hawaii's residents and visitors.